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Wednesday
September 3, 1952

John briefed the U.S. Delegation to the meeting of the International Bank and International Monetary Fund at 9:30, and afterwards we all went to the Palazzo of the Bellas Artes where President Aleman of Mexico made a speech, followed by one delivered by Señor Lafer, the Brazilian Finance Minister (Chairman for these meetings). Seconding orations were in order from the U.K., Ceylon, Dominican Republic, France, and the U.S. Chairman Snyder.

Afterwards all hands adjourned to the Presidential Palace where President Aleman greeted the delegates, then regaled them with champagne and cake. Thence to the Versalles Room at the del Prado to a buffet lunch given by Black of the Bank, and Ivar Rooth of the Fund. Masses of tempting food, and tables of Martinis, Scotch, and Bourbon. Warnings against drinking water or milk, and eating fish, uncooked peeled fruit, salad, raw vegetables, ice cream, highly seasoned food, were in vain. I was tempted and did eat mightily, especially turkey and smoked jumbo shrimps. E. went out to a somewhat similar buffet for wives of delegates.

Wonderful weather thus far. A mild short rain each afternoon, otherwise sunny. Temperature between 65 to 70 by day, and cool at night. Just right for spring or autumn clothes. The city, which I had last visited in 1938, is growing fast, and contains about 2 million inhabitants. Being built on marshland, the buildings have sinking spells, and sewage disposal appears to have presented ~~almost insoluble problems. A great~~ deal of gimcrack construction, many fine Hispano-Mexican churches, few fine old private houses. Streets ~~filthy, with as great a congestion~~ of automobile traffic--thousands of glittering new American cars--as one

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